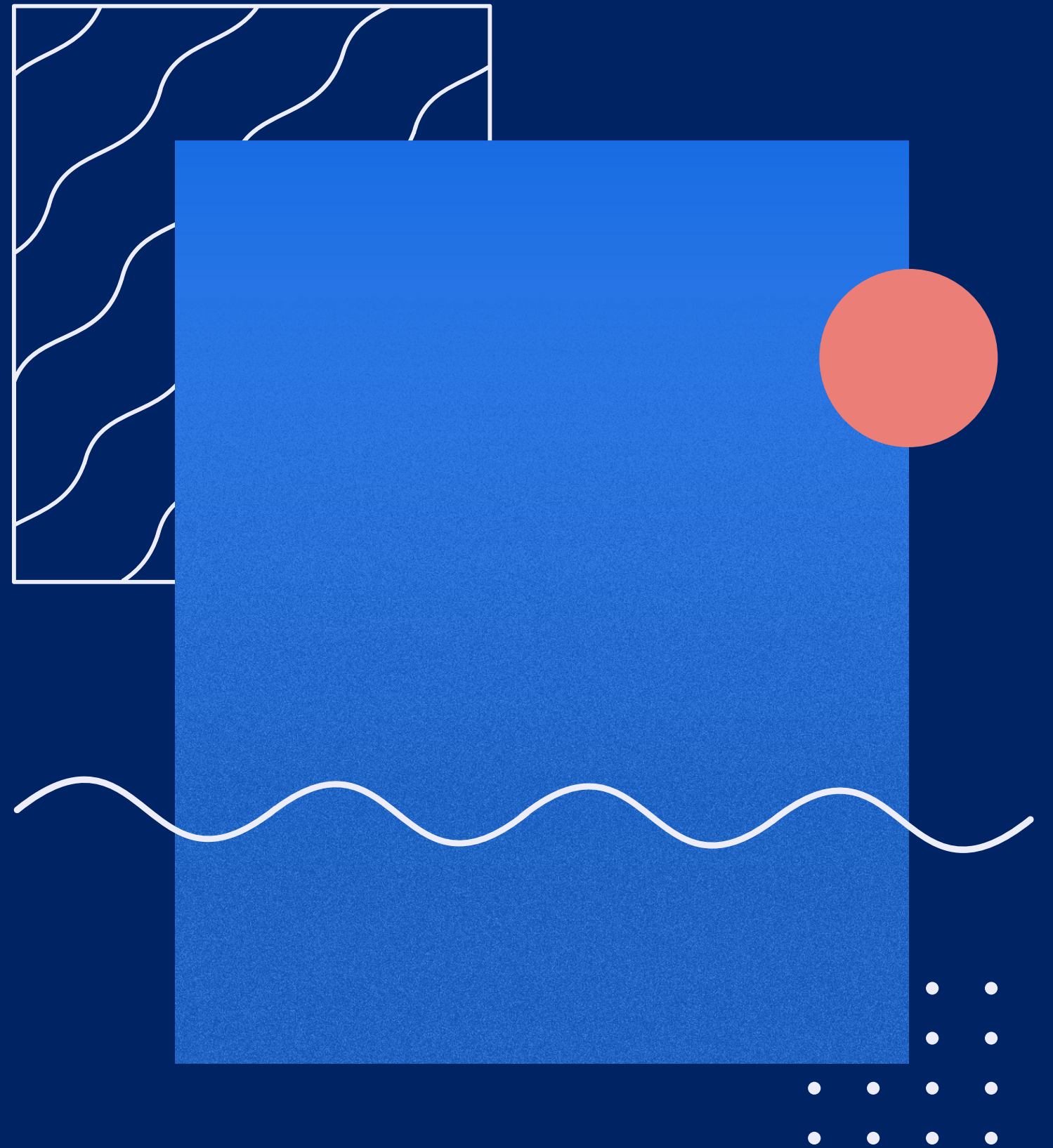


Exegesis

PITTS THEOLOGY LIBRARY REFERENCE
LIBRARIANS



Exegesis is the work of hearing the text on its own terms and then sharing what you heard.





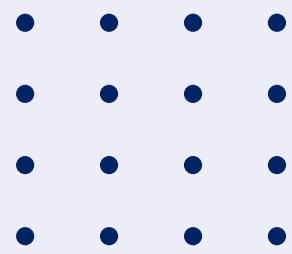
THE THREE STEPS OF EXEGESIS

Listening to the
text

Testing what you
heard

Explaining the
text

LISTENING TO THE TEXT



Listening to the text requires *close reading*, attention to the literary and historical context, and paying attention to what is said and not just what you hear.

Reading the text in its original language, or in multiple translations, is a good way to begin hearing the text.

This stage of study requires analysis of words, phrases, genre and form, historical realities, and the text's theological perspective, which may or may not be different from your own.

You'll need multiple translations, dictionaries, and a concordance.

TEXTUAL TOOLS TO HELP YOU LISTEN

For translation:
[Bible Gateway](#)

For word studies and concordances:
[Step Bible](#)
[Blue Letter Bible](#)

Dictionaries:
[New Interpreters Bible Dictionary](#) (current Candler students)
[HarperCollins](#) (abridged, but freely accessible)
[Bible Odyssey](#) (managed by SBL via NEH grant)



Noah and Gilgamesh

Ancient stories of Noah and Gilgamesh are similar

[FIND OUT MORE »](#)

Bible Odyssey: People, Places, and Passages

Explore the fascinating origins of the Bible and its eventful history. On Bible Odyssey, the world's leading scholars share the latest historical and literary research on key people, places, and passages of the Bible.

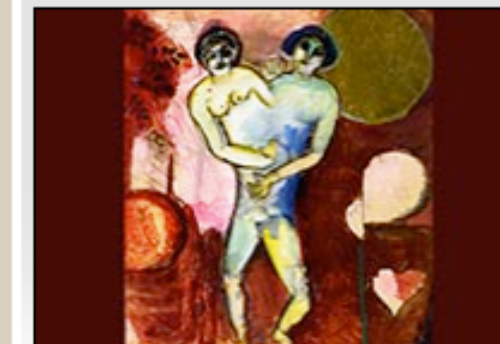
 [ASK A SCHOLAR](#)

Focus On
Genealogies



Hagar

Hagar, the African mother of many nations, who saw and named God, was enslaved, impregnated, abandoned, and



Adam

Adam may be thought of as a unique collective individual who embodies the complexity and potential that



Isaac

Son of Abraham and father of Jacob, Isaac is the middle of the three patriarchs of the people Israel

REFERENCE TOOLS

Encyclopedias:

[Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and...](#) (reference series)

[Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception](#) (EBR)

Texts from the ancient world:

[Contexts of Scripture](#) (ancient Near East)

[Hidden Riches](#) (ancient Near East)

[Loeb Classical Library](#) (Greco-Roman world)

[TLG](#)

Pitts Research Guides:

[Greco-Roman World](#)

[Introduction to the Old Testament](#)

[Online Resources for Research](#)

[TLG Guide](#)

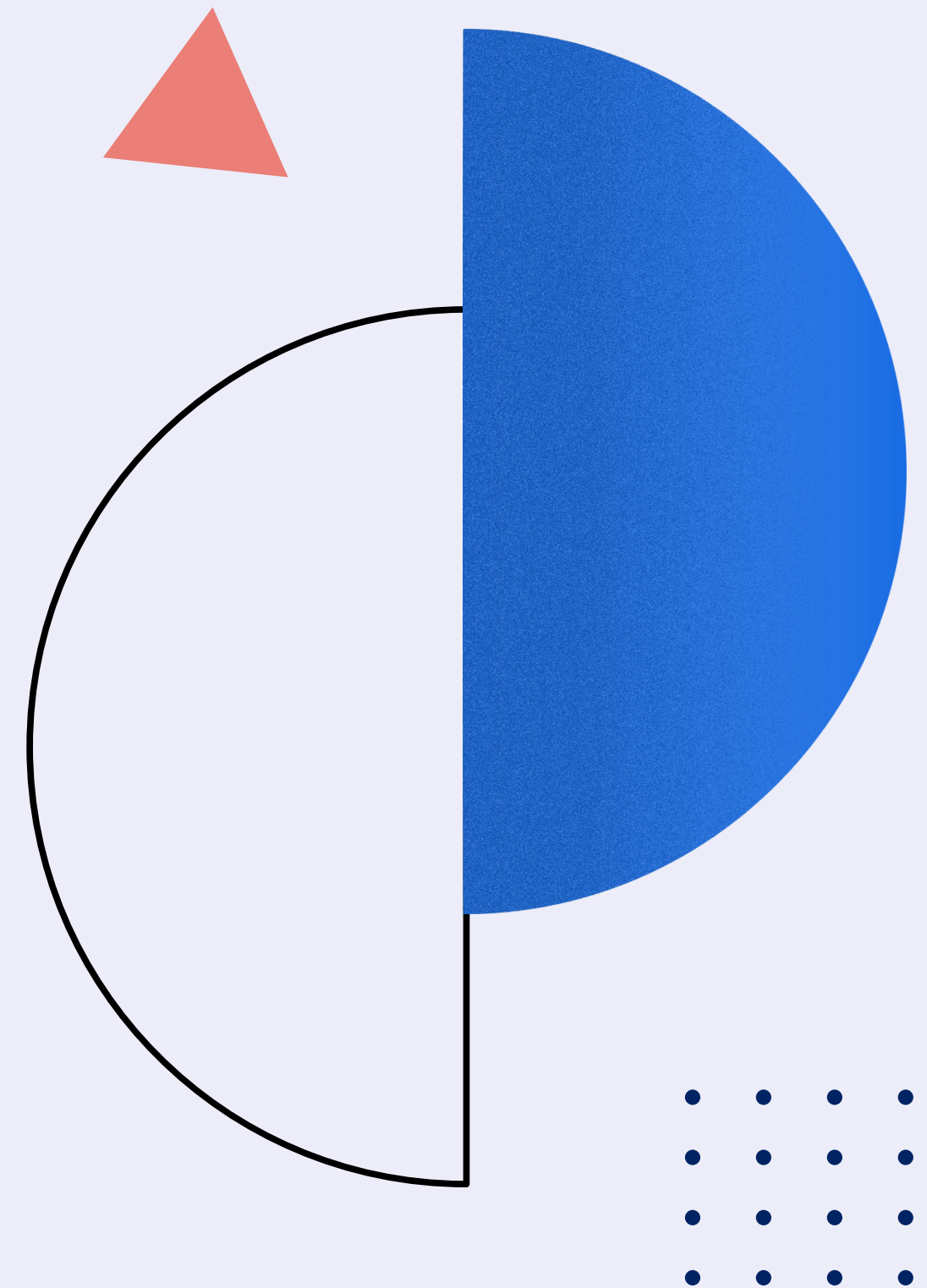
The screenshot shows the Oxford Biblical Studies Online website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site name and links for 'ABOUT', 'FOR AUTHORS', 'WHAT'S NEW', and 'LOGOUT'. Below this is a search bar with the text 'Search Oxford Biblical Studies' and a magnifying glass icon, followed by an 'OR' separator and a 'BIBLE VERSE LOOKUP' button. A secondary navigation bar includes 'ADVANCED SEARCH', 'BROWSE', 'BIBLE TEXTS', 'TIMELINES', and 'TOOLS & RESOURCES'. The main content area features a 'FOCUS ON' section with a large image of a bronze sculpture depicting two figures, one embracing the other. To the right of the image is a text box titled 'The Prodigal Son in Literature' with a 'Read more' link. Further right is a 'BROWSE OUR CATEGORIES' section with three items: 'Reference' (6,000+ entries), 'Bible Text' (six texts with commentary and concordances), and 'Images and Maps' (hundreds of visual perspectives). Below the 'FOCUS ON' section is a 'FROM THE DESK OF Michael D. Coogan' section with a small portrait and a text snippet about Romans 13, with a 'Read more' link. To the right of this is a 'VIEW BIBLICAL TEXTS IN THREE DIFFERENT WAYS' section with three options: 'Full Screen Mode', 'Side-by-side view with commentary', and 'Side-by-side view of two Biblical texts', each with a brief description. At the bottom, there are two columns: 'WHAT'S NEW' with three items including 'New Books of the Bible Lesson Plans' and 'Focus On: The Prodigal Son in Literature', and 'FEATURE' with a 'Learn More' section about an article on 'The Bible in Literature' and a 'Lesson Plans' section.

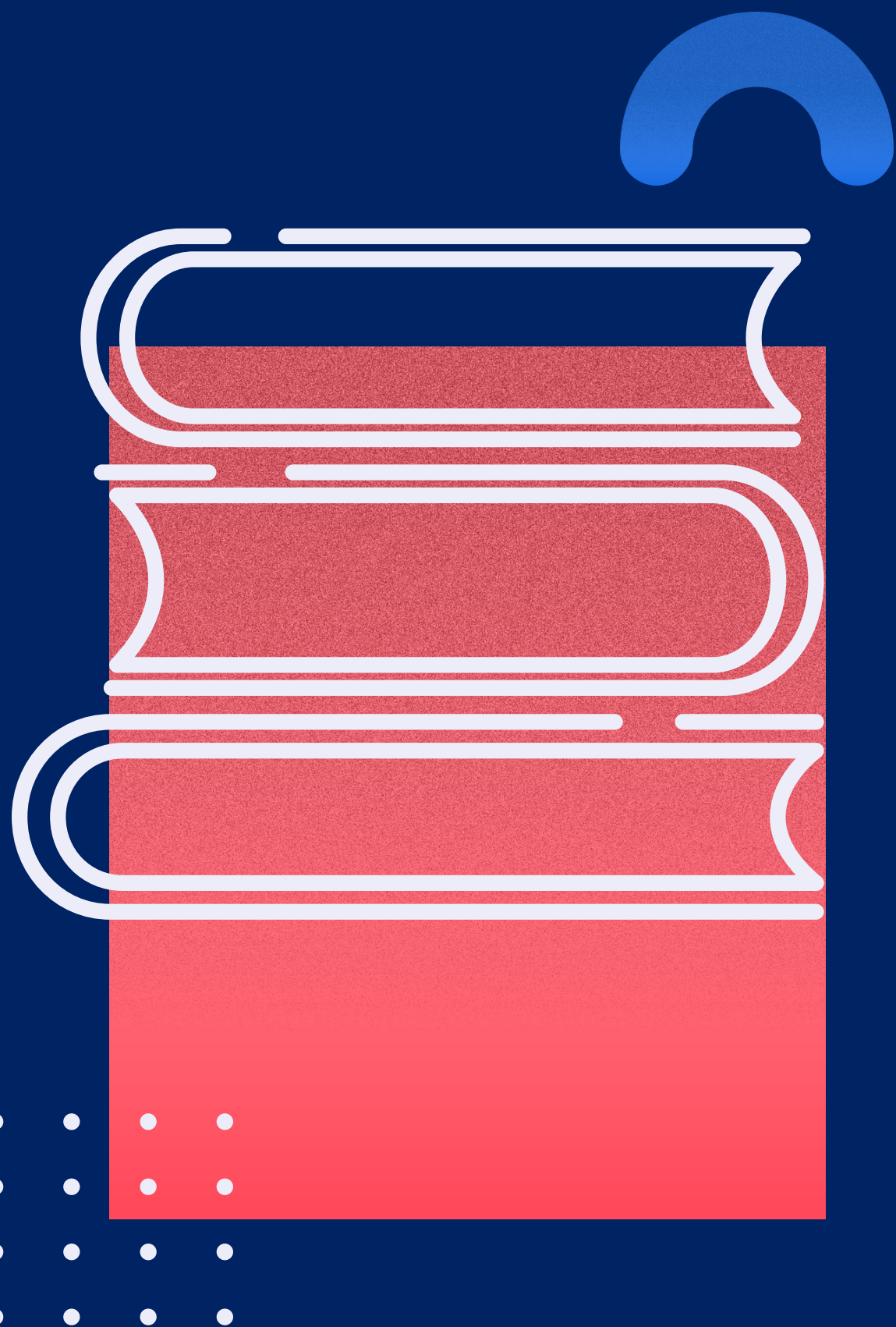
TESTING WHAT YOU HEARD

Once you've read the text and done some basic research on your own, you'll want to test your preliminary conclusions and join a conversation with "The Commentators."

Use the library [catalog](#), [Atla](#), [OT](#) and [NT](#) Commentary Guides, or speak with your instructor or a reference librarian.

Read with a critical eye.





READING COMMENTATORS

Commentators discuss biblical texts in several ways. They might publish commentaries, monographs, or articles on a specific book of the Bible or even a particular passage.

Commentaries can have different foci. They may be more or less theological, literary, homiletical, or technical.

You'll want to find the right type of resource for your needs.

Every commentary is a snapshot into how the text was understood at a particular time.

COMMENTARY SERIES

Homiletical

Feasting on the Word
Interpretation

Theological

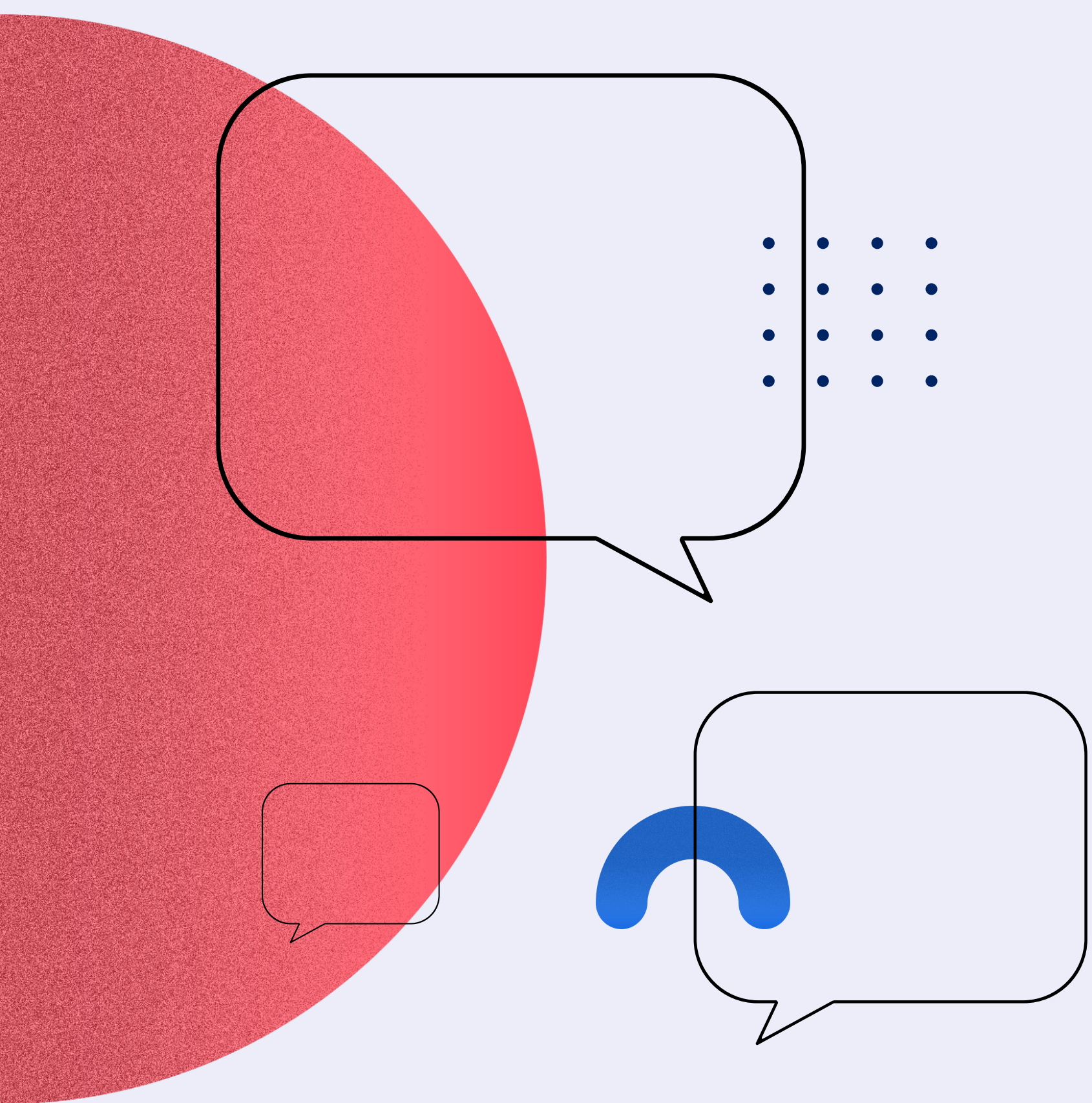
Word Biblical Commentary
Old/New Testament Library
Jewish Publication Society
Wisdom Commentary

Technical

Hermeneia
Anchor Bible Yale

Reception Historical

Second Temple Literature
Ancient Christian Commentaries
Rabbinic Traditions
John Wesley's Notes on the Bible



FINDING ARTICLES

ATLA

BiBIL

Old Testament

Abstracts

New Testament

Abstracts

Elenchus

EXPLAINING THE TEXT

Every exegesis project will have a unique desired outcome and focus.

Exegesis for a sermon or Bible study will probably look different than a course assignment in a biblical studies class at Candler.

Exegesis for theologians has a slightly different purpose than exegesis for biblical scholars.

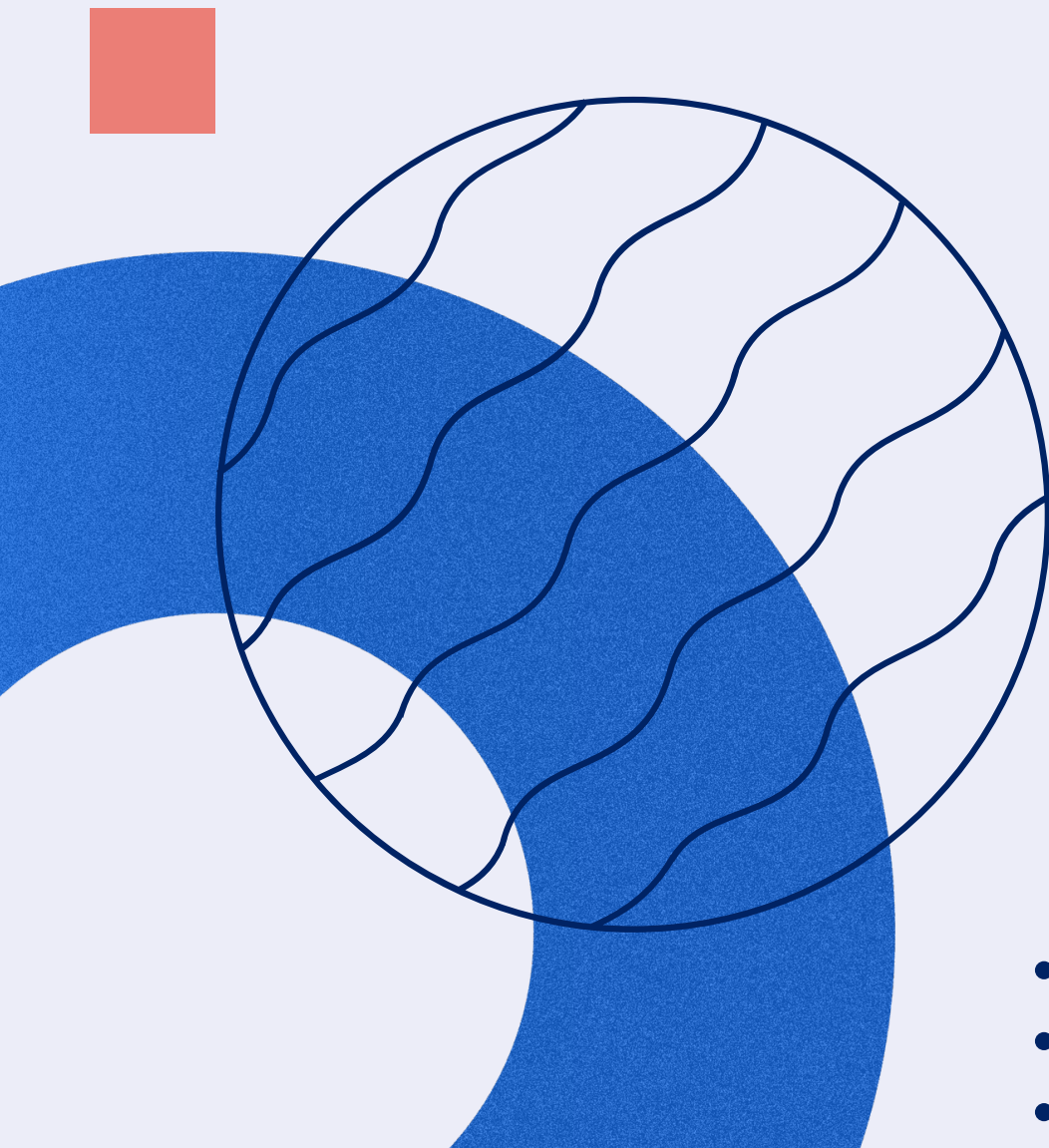
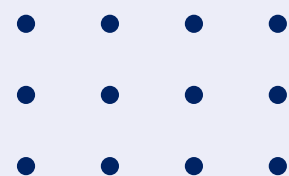
Consider your audience through every stem of the exegesis process.

Who are they? How does this text relate to them? What might they know or want to know about the text? What might be new or shocking to them?

Build your focus/thesis statement around your research and outline an argument. Be cautious with thematic organization.

Support your argument by returning to the text and engaging secondary evidence ("The Commentators").

Finally, conclude your argument. Why does your research/argument/voice matter?



TECHNICAL ISSUES

Use the right
academic style:
SBL or Chicago/Turabian

Get another
perspective on
exegesis:
Mary E. Hinkle, "Exegesis for
Textual Preaching," *Word and
World* 19.1 (Winter 1999): 58–64

Ask for help:
pitts.emory.edu/ask
Research Guide for
Exegesis